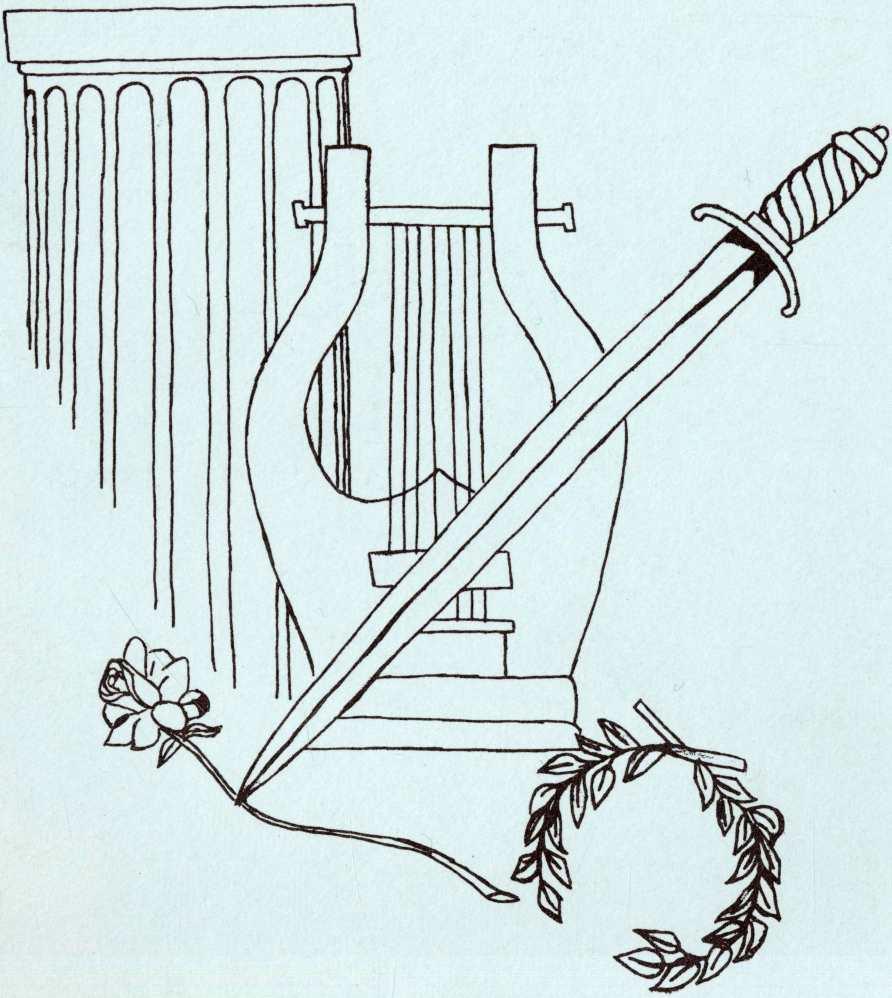


Tower

Tower

Editor: Barbara Reynolds

Layout Editor: Clay Nordan

Staff: Margaret Herron,
Kay Yates, John Watson,
Charles Roberts

Judges: Dr. David Morgan, Mr. Wm.
Cobb, Mrs. Lila Wells, Terry Barr,
Pam O'Donnell, Ann Nathews

1975-1976

Table of Contents

Untitled	Helen A. Openshaw	2
The Poet	Debbie Reideler	2
City	Billy Watt	3
Untitled	Jack Wright	4
The Grandfather Clock	Russell Thomas	6
The ERA Is Only Fair	Lynne Pritchett	7
Sonnet I	Jane Phares	10
The Lost Chord	Scott Wolfe	11
Orchid	Gary Greene	13
The Affair	Mary Gonzales	15
To Love And Not Be Loved In Turn	Sarah Rankin	16
A Game of Football	Jim Garrett	17
Coke Please	Joel Terry May	19
Untitled	Margaret Herron	23
Spaghetti	Rodger A. Matthews	30
Eenhorn	Inge K. Hinrichs	31
The Pit	Barbara Reynolds	32
Role Call	Don Tinsley	34
Time In Thailand: Air Force Blue	Rodger A. Matthews	35
Ice	Mary Anderson	36
Phantom	Russell Thomas	37
Dawn	Jack Wright	38
Untitled	Debra D. Reddin	39
Detente Headache #493,001	Billy Watt	41
My Need	Debbie Reideler	42
The Group	Barbara Reynolds	44
From The Triumphs of Adolf and Petra	Russell Thomas	45
Roller Coaster	T. J. Phillips	47
Novel	Rodger A. Matthews	49

Art

Pat Carpenter	22
Melanie Cook	25
Paul Hayes	26
Mary Howard	21
Tanya Morris	28
Chuck Pittman	1, 5, 9, 33
Floy Spencer	20, 23, 24, 27, 29
John Watson	14, 37
Kay Yates	16, 31
John Yoakum	44

Beneath the Wheel
a staggering for recognition
in what has passed,
and what will ensue.
A gentle reminder he will not offer
for he knows Pride aside
from the Pain.

He hobbles forward
absorbing still two realms
one behind, one ahead
and wonders . . . in which
he was more Secure.

Helen A. Openshaw

The Poet

A peddler of phrases,
I pull from my sack
Mind-boggling mazes
Crocheted in black,
Ancients: Sagacious,
Bearded, and bent,
Radicals outrageous,
Dime words to be spent
By the children.

Debbie Reideler

City

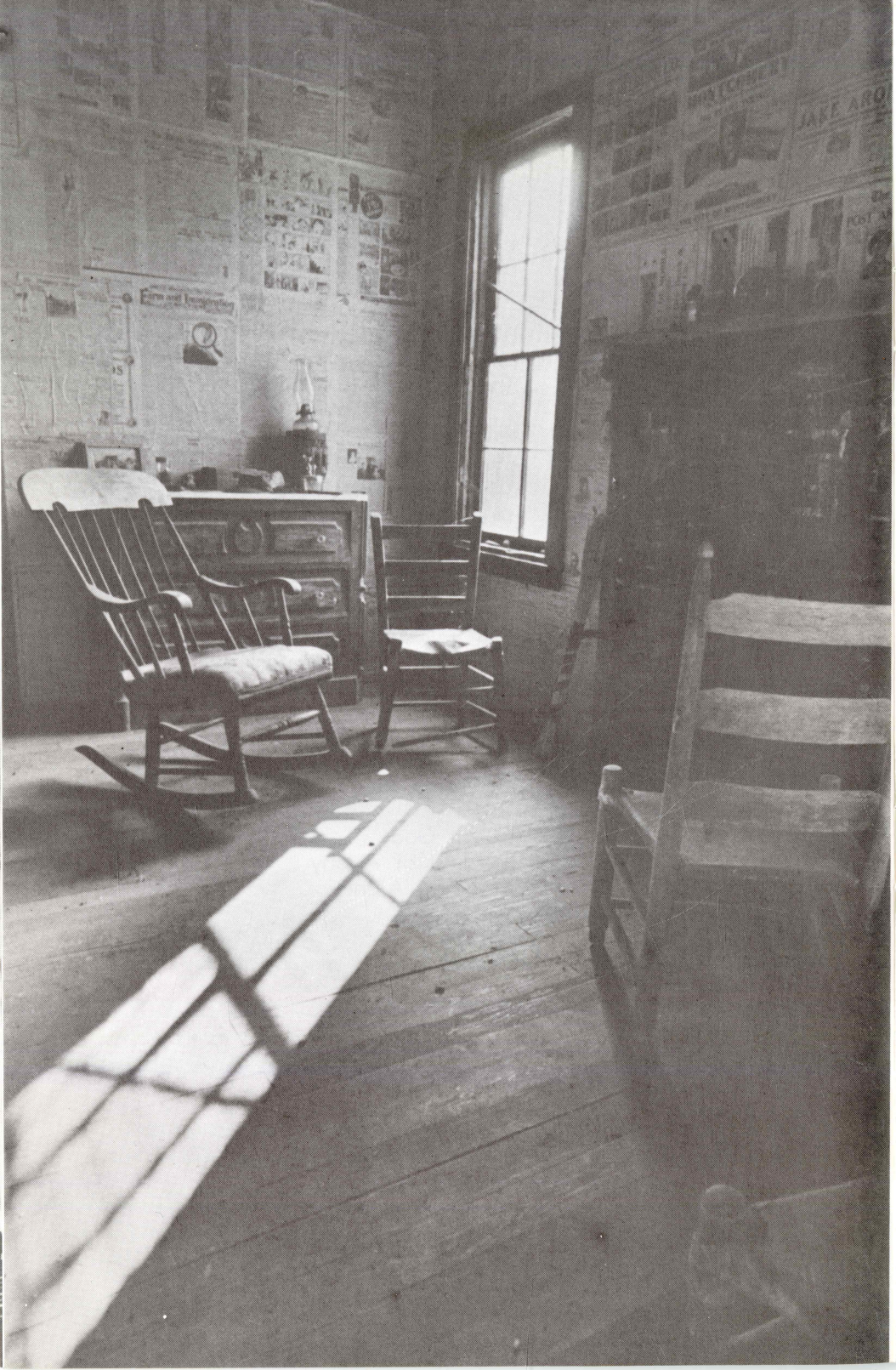
A caballero
of religious order
in a frock of holy indignation
I among heathens enter.
A solvent
wherewith all troubles
—dreams and such—
die to self in favor of the masses.
(trampled on cold pavement)
She lies
in all her loud splendor
a seductive hand.
Gaping
A yawning cave
and lolling tongue
a whore.

Unfrocked I be
I am devoured.

Billy Watt

At last,
the long night is passed.
(Loneliness)
Lying in a strange bed,
in the darkness
screaming silently into the blackness
of night
and
feeling,
exploring the
everpresent pain.
And, oh God,
The howling of Agony
of being Alone
with myself.
Yeah,
That's the worst . . .
counting
the seconds
till the sun
rises,
once more to reveal
and restore
my
sanity.
Why God . . .
must there be night?

Jack Wright



The Grandfather Clock

TOWER Award for Short Story

Sherman drove his men along this very ridge heading to set Hellfire to Atlanta, and the old ridge just ascreamin' to swallow him up. He was a devil, was Sherman, and so was his ancestors all the way back, and he said war's hell and I guess he ought to know . . . See that circle of boulders down yonder? That's where Wayne Murdoch got shot on that very same march to the sea, and you know who done it? Why, your own great grandaddy did and he were only seventeen year old. Shot him dead in the back while he was amakin' coffee just before sunup and Wayne never hearing nothing nor knew what hit him hardly exceptin' his last thought was "Oh, Mother! God am I comin' home?" And your great grandaddy went down and pushed his body away and drank the coffee that was already hot. But he got it too and not a mile away from his last cup of coffee, only they never knowed who he was because whoever done for him shot his face clean off. No, nobody ever known him again, but the ground where he lay did. It knowed every one of them boys, devoured 'em all. Wayne Murdoch's blood trickled down into the creek where he got water for his coffee, and that blood was sucked up by the roots of corn belonged to Aril Potter, he and his woman eaten it, God knows where it is now . . . That's how well the earth knows them that 'died there, knows 'em better'n their own mas did. But the ground don't tell no tales, what's dead's dead and done's done, it's got its claim on 'em forever . . . You know, I can almost see Wayne Murdoch's bones now, laying there among them rock, all covered with leaves and dogwood flowers. And I wonder what his ghost thinks, sometimes, early in the morning, just before sunup, with the mist creeping around the hemlock and he hears the sound of them diesel trucks out on the highway. I do wonder what his ghost thinks sometimes . . .

Russell Thomas

The ERA Is Only Fair

TOWER Award for Essay

A bumper sticker on the back of a car reads: "Stop the Equal Rights Amendment! You can't fool Mother Nature". The truth is that the ERA is not trying to fool anyone. The single sentence amendment reads: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The key words in this statement are "under the law". The ERA is not trying to fool Mather Nature by making women cut their hair, wear suits and ties, and become the breadwinner. It will simply make the laws of our federal and state governments apply fairly to both sexes.

First, the ERA will give women job opportunities presently denied them supposedly for their protection. It will do this by ending laws which restrict how many hours a woman can work, how many pounds she can lift, and what kind of work she can do. She will no longer be denied physical labor jobs simply because she is a woman, but will be hired according to her capability. She will no longer be prevented from getting jobs which pay more and offer advancement.

The ERA will enable a woman to receive the technical training she needs for these types of jobs. She can no longer be denied the chance to learn woodworking, mechanics, or metal working.

The proposed amendment will also give women a fair chance in education by prohibiting higher IQ and grade point average requirements at institutions which have higher standards for women. It will also assure equal pay for women faculty.

Another thing ERA will do is allow married women to engage in business as freely as men. She will no longer need her husband's consent to sell her property or his signature to apply for loans or credit.

Also, this amendment will prevent a woman from being forced under state law to move anywhere her husband goes. Presently, some states consider it "desertion" if she refuses to move with him. She can be denied her civil rights. If a woman has a good job she does not want to leave, the ERA would allow the problem to be solved between the couple and not under threat of state law.

The ERA will also assure that a woman convicted of a crime is not given a harsher sentence than a man convicted of the same crime, as is often the case.

This amendment will not cause women to be drafted, Congress already has the power to draft women. The ERA will allow women to join military service on the same basis as men. Presently, women must meet higher standards than men. The ERA will end restrictions on military assignments and promotions. It will give women the same military benefits as men, such as education, loans,

housing, health, employment, and job training. If the draft is needed again, women will be subject to the same physical and moral exemptions as men. The ERA will not take mothers away from their children.

Many people think the ERA applies only to women. But it is also fair to men. The ERA will enable widowers to receive their wives' Social Security payments just as widows are entitled to their husbands' payments.

The ERA will give men the benefit of not having to automatically pay alimony and child support. Instead the amount of alimony and child support will be determined by the need and the ability to pay. The ERA will also give men a chance at child custody.

If it becomes the 27th Amendment, the ERA will be fair to both sexes. It will not make rest rooms, dormitories, and barracks coeducational. The constitutional right to privacy prevents it from doing so. The ERA will not legalize homosexual marriage. It will simply mean that if it is illegal for a man to marry another man, then it is illegal for a woman to marry another woman. The ERA will not change social customs or personal relationships. Nor will it affect laws based on the physical differences between the sexes, such as rape laws.

So, the ERA should be made the 27th Amendment because it will make our laws apply fairly to both sexes and it will give both sexes equal rights and equal opportunities.

Lynne Pritchett

Sonnet I

The lover's aren't poetic anymore—
Young men speak not in couplets, quatrains, nor
Do women write such lines as 'Lizbeth penned
To Robert, heart, and soul through them to rend.
The lines beloved master wrote of love
To gentle mistress fair, her heart to move,
Still lie on pages cold with age and fame
But live no more within from whence they came.
The days are gone when love expression found—
The words that once were all no more abound.
For "how do I love thee" is almost gone;
"If ever two were one" is now unknown.
Now lovers speak no more in phrases sweet—
Such words of love, when tried, fall incomplete.

Jane Phares

"The Lost Chord"
(from **Songs of Life**)

The timbre of the sounds increased
As the choir began to sing.
The Song of Life was on the program;
In three movements it was written.
It told of the Past, the Present, and the Future.
Prelude to Time was the opening number:

"As matter takes the form of mind
And beings are created,
Remember, God made us different
And commanded us to love and care . . ."

Its notes were soft and sweet.
It was a tone poem, a picture of compassion.
An implication of hope and fulfillment.

Dorian was the featured artist.
He composed this song of life,
Yet his mind was sick and troubled;
The disease had no known cure.

"The past holds no comfort
Its world is filled with hate
Why can I not be accepted
For what I am?
Damned be those who judged me
To be insane and different!"

Dorian sang this song of his past
And displayed a longing soul—
A soul which desired acceptance.
But the audience was unmoved.

II

"The present has no meaning
It reiterates my hopeless past.
Tis folly to long for a better future."

The second movement echoed the melody of its predecessor.
The audience remained unmoved.

III

"A vision of the future
Shows foreboding doom
And a prison cell around my soul.
The answer is .....!"

The last movement spoke of the future
And told of fear for living.
Dorian soon was to tell the answer
To the solution of his deep problem—
But he forgot the chord.
The audience left and never cared.

IV

Dorian began his search for the forgotten chord.
He went thru many lands
Only to meet repeated failure.
The journey carried Dorian
To the land of Hope.
If here he was unsuccessful,
He would end his quest.
He entered a wonderful garden
Filled with marvelous sights
And soon beheld the fair, young maiden,
Who sang **The Song of Life.**

Phrygian was the maiden's name.
She also was judged insane.
She sought life's only answer
But forgot the ending chord.
As Phrygian sang, Dorian remembered
The once forgotten chord.
Their voices raised to Heaven:

"The answer is Love and Hope"

In each other they found love and understanding,
Yet, Nobody really cares.

Scott Wolfe

Orchid

TOWER Award for Poetry

Her orchid, hastily pinned,
Fell loose within the yard
Within the hour,
Without the popular glance.
Kneeling to lift it from the dirt,
She smudged her skirt
Beyond concealment
And paused to remark the sand
So lately freckled by her glistening eyes.
But there was nothing to offer
Save whispered apologies
For a pin misplaced.

She stared long at the sand
Before she could stand and walk away,
A single petal crumpled in her hand.

Gary Greene

The Affair

The grey-purple dawn brings
the sunlight, today,
the truth, as you know it.
You smile and fake your way
through the life
You haven't the courage to change.

You wait only for the darkness
that hides
the stares of suspecting eyes.
Knowing in the shadows
Yours will be the hand
That he will seek.

Mary Gonzales

To Love And Not Be In Return

I watch a gull sail through the
foggy mist over the water and white
sand—the quiet haze that blends to make a peaceful
sound . . . and I love that bird
But He sails on
I am alone . . . but I love
Did it hurt to love, and not be loved?

But that was a bird
I give my life, my love, my song, my soul to you
I saw and loved—I hesitated,
and then I reached deep into my heart and
stretched forth a quivering hand to
you with my life held there.
But you sailed on
I am alone—can I love?
could this be love—It hurts so.

And now I am afraid to give—
Love is just a thing for birds to share
They don't care they just sail on.

I can love and give all, as long as I never
expect you to give back—pretend you are
a bird—for if I reach out—Love might
leave my hand empty.

Sarah Rankin

A Game of Football?

What's that? You plan to attend a Shelby County High School football game? Having attended a number of Shelby County High School's football games myself, I can say that it will not be an entertaining experience. However, if you insist on going, you may still enjoy yourself by using your imagination.

As you approach the stadium, you will encounter a civilian volunteer directing traffic. This is an excellent chance to pretend that you are visiting a foreign land. Since you are unable to understand his language, you must follow his hand and arm gestures, which he makes by swinging his arms in all directions. What fun! You find yourself safely parked in a cow pasture, blocked on all sides by other tourists.

Then, you are ready for the walk to the stadium. Pretend that you are on a scouting expedition hiking through a rugged mountain range. The trek will be long and exhausting so take some food and water to refresh yourself along the way. You need not worry about snakes, but you should avoid stepping on the small circular mounds that abound in the area. You may have to change shoes.

Now, you have made it safely to the stadium and have taken the seat reserved by your ticket. Waiting for the game to begin, you may want to participate in a dodge ball game. But instead of dodging a ball, you dodge rocks, coke cans, cups of ice, and sticks thrown by passersby walking behind the stadium. This is an excellent chance for audience participation, since the passersby do not discriminate between victims.

Also, you can use your imagination to enjoy the game itself. As the game begins, you will become aware of the announcer's voice coming out of public address speakers located around the field. Here is your chance to become a speech instructor. Take notes. Check for pronunciation, grammatical mistakes, and organization.

When you fill your notebook, turn your attention to the scoreboard. Over half of the light bulbs in the scoreboard are blown. Pretend that you are on the "Concentration" quiz show. It is your task to guess the score, the quarter, the down, and the hidden message, which is probably that they need new light bulbs.

After you have finished the scoreboard quiz, you may wish to participate in the favorite pastime of all Shelby County High School fans—coaching. You are the coach. It is fourth down and a yard to go. What do you do? Punt? Pass? End run? Line plunge? It is your decision. And what if the real coach's decision does not agree with yours? Boo, hiss, curse. Throw peanuts, throw paper, throw up. How could he disagree with you? Ah, but this also becomes monotonous as the game progresses. However, you can return to your dodge ball game. There are always passersby walking behind the stadium.

At last, the game is over; but do not despair. Using your imagination during the post game activities proves to be the most rewarding experience of the night.

If Shelby County High School loses, and the chance is good that they will, pretend that you are watching a slapstick comedy. Laugh out loud as the fans wad their programs and fling them into the air; laugh out loud as the players throw their helmets into the fence; laugh out loud as irate mothers scream: "We'll get 'em next year!"

Now things could get out of hand. There is a good chance for fights. If this happens, pretend you are in a riot zone, carefully avoiding furious fathers, irate mothers, and half-crazed players. You must not feel safe even when surrounded by home fans. They have been known to fight among themselves.

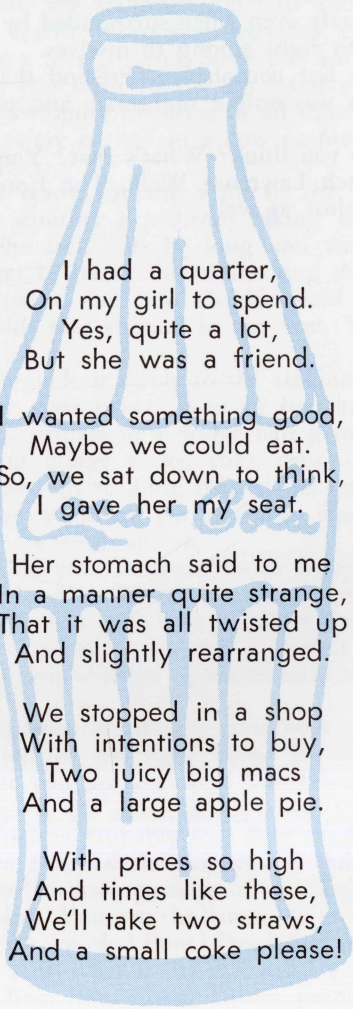
You have one last consolation. Pretend that the game with its related activities was only a nightmare and put it out of your mind.

Well, what do you think? What's that? You have decided to stay home and watch Lawrence Welk, The Rookies, and Marcus Welby, M.D.? It's just as well.

Jim Garrett

COKE PLEASE

Joel Terry May



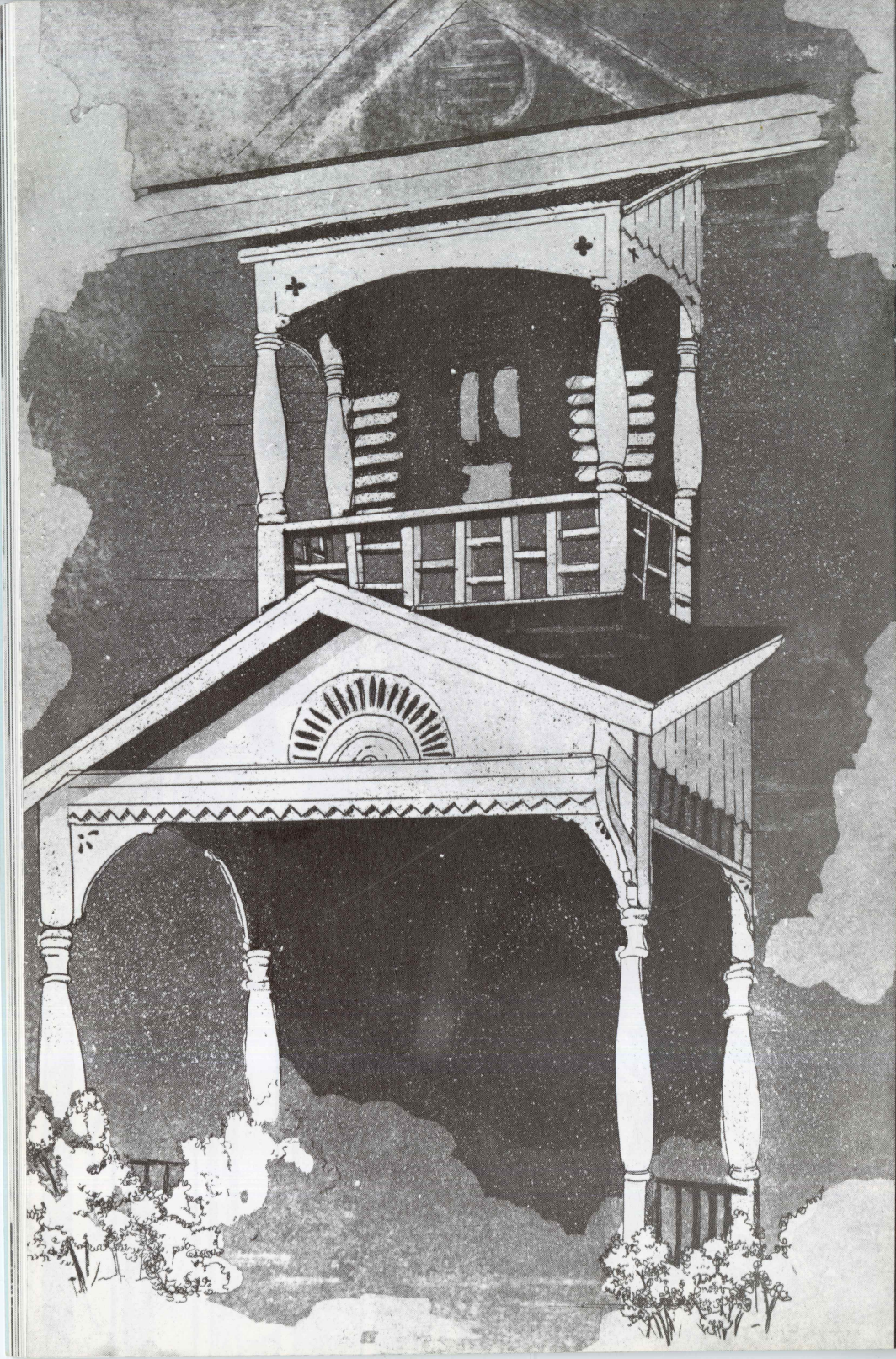
I had a quarter,
On my girl to spend.
Yes, quite a lot,
But she was a friend.

I wanted something good,
Maybe we could eat.
So, we sat down to think,
I gave her my seat.

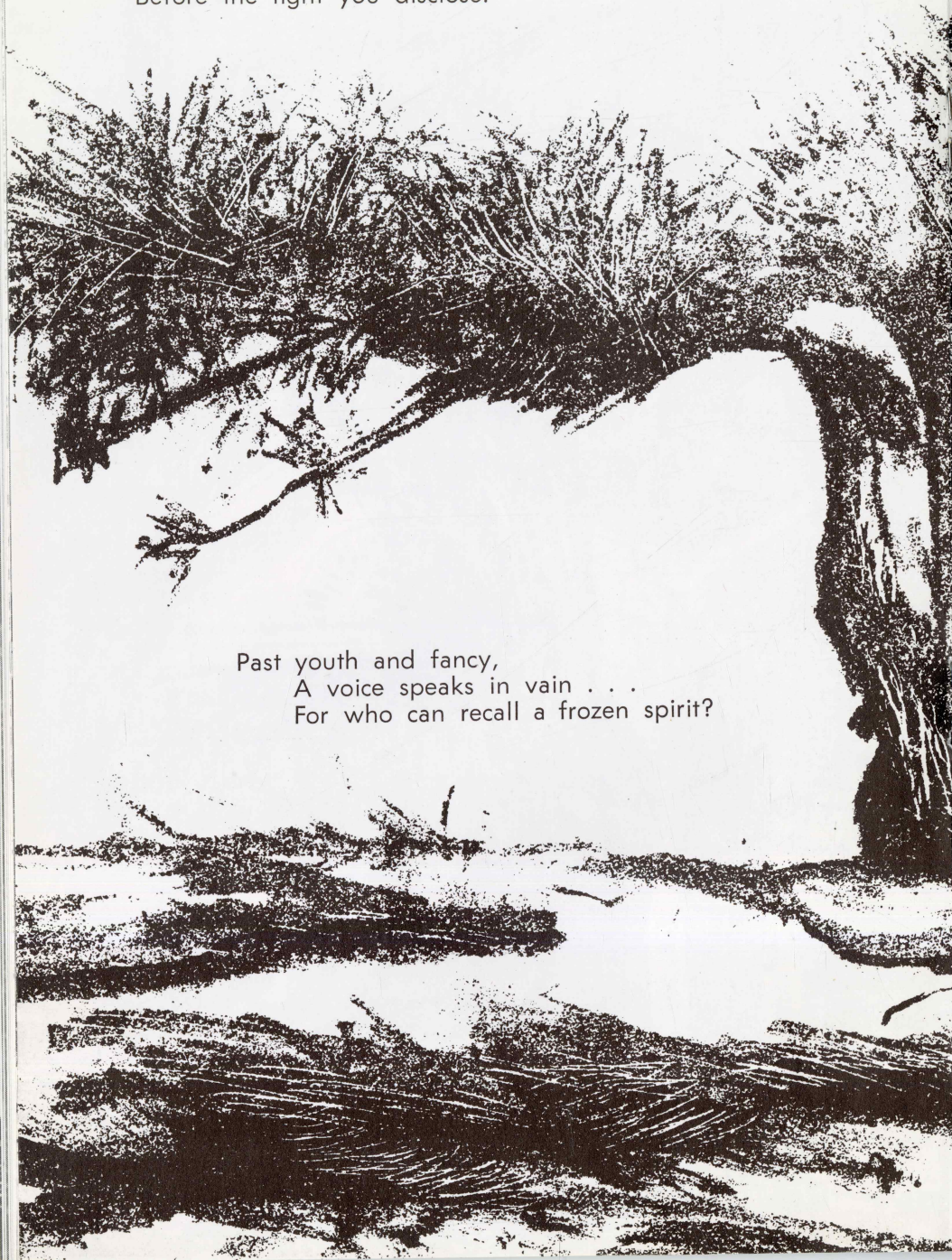
Her stomach said to me
In a manner quite strange,
That it was all twisted up
And slightly rearranged.

We stopped in a shop
With intentions to buy,
Two juicy big macs
And a large apple pie.

With prices so high
And times like these,
We'll take two straws,
And a small coke please!

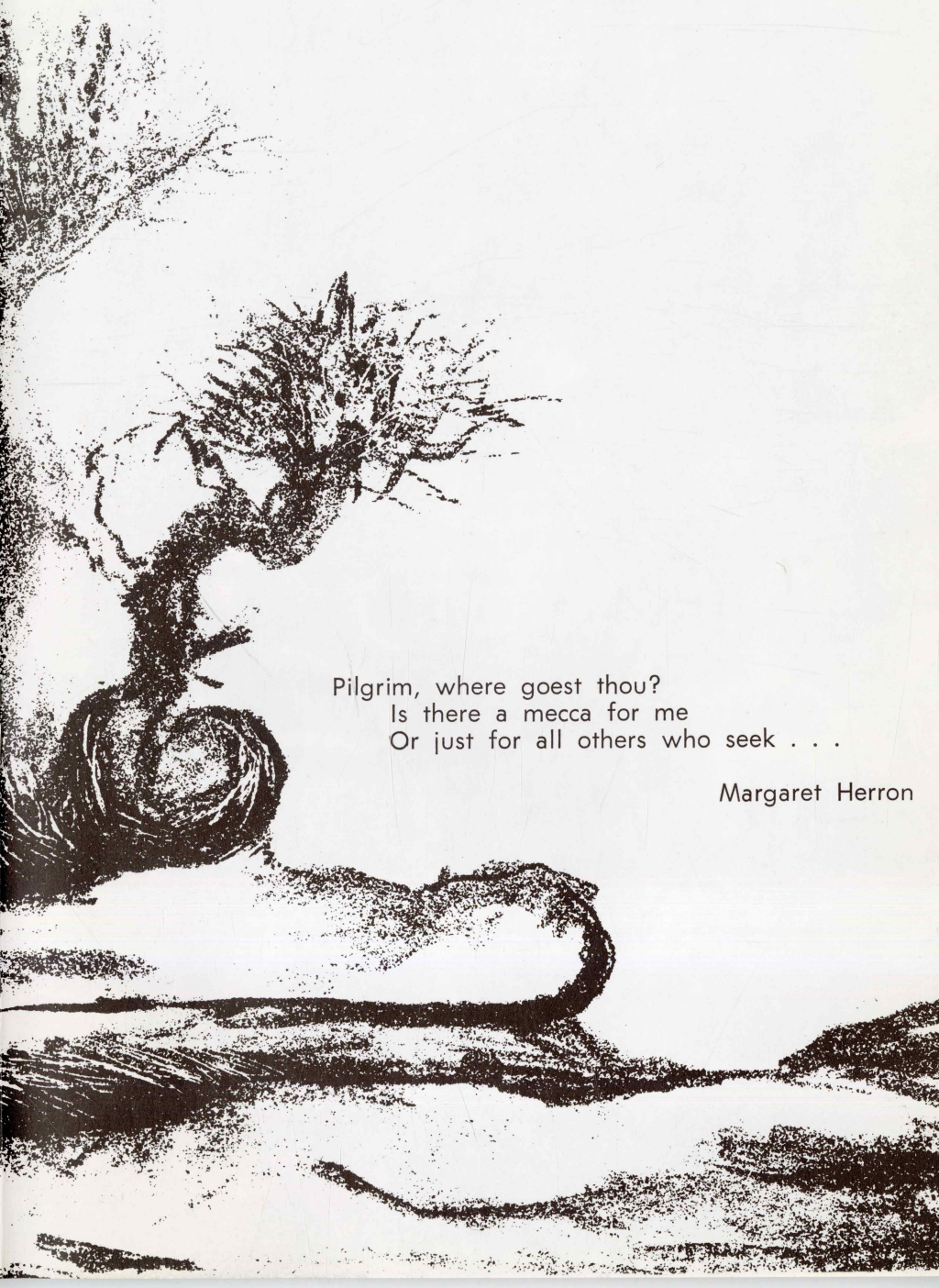


Cruel wind . . .
We bow unwilling
Before the light you disclose.



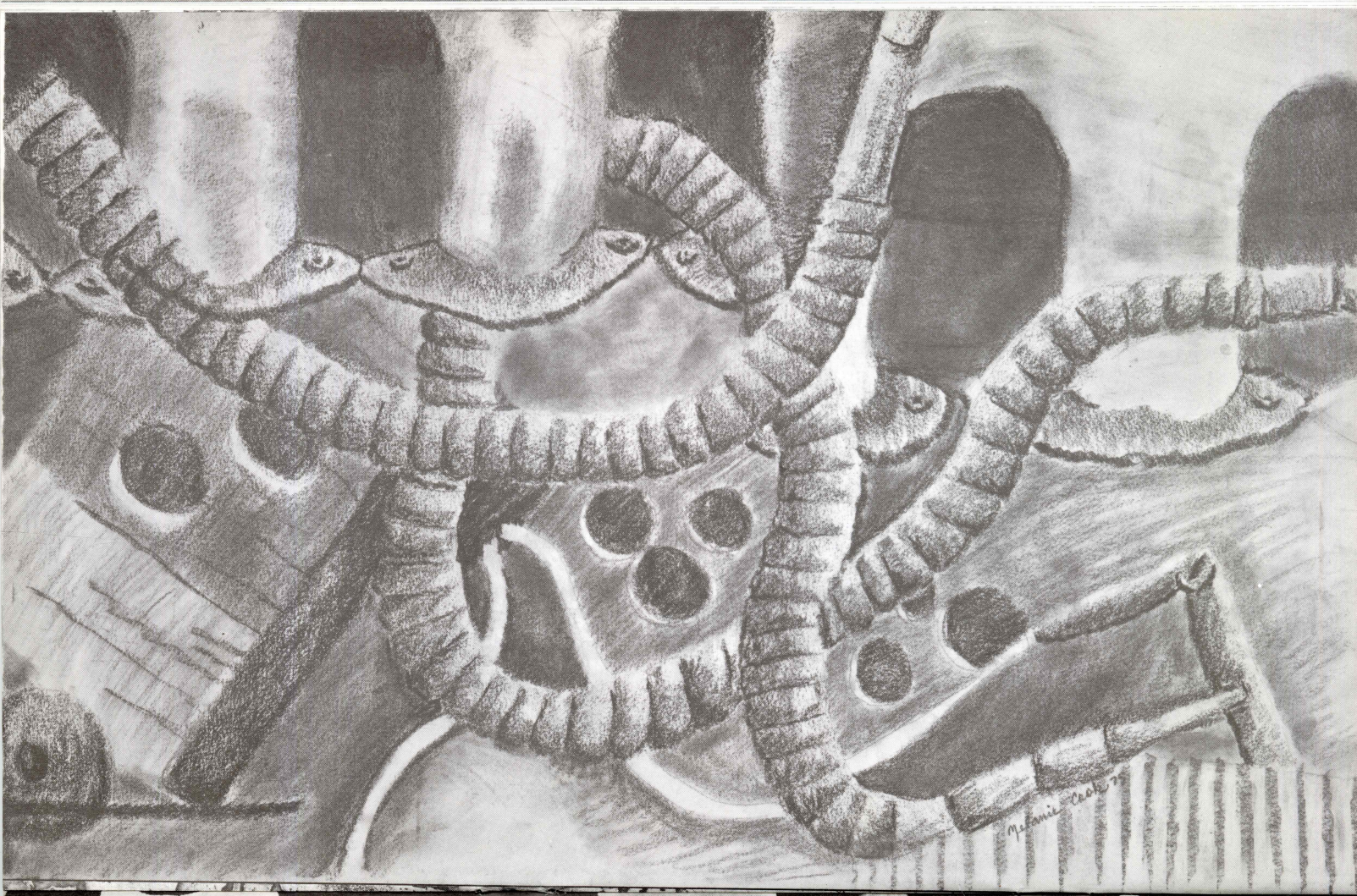
Past youth and fancy,
A voice speaks in vain . . .
For who can recall a frozen spirit?

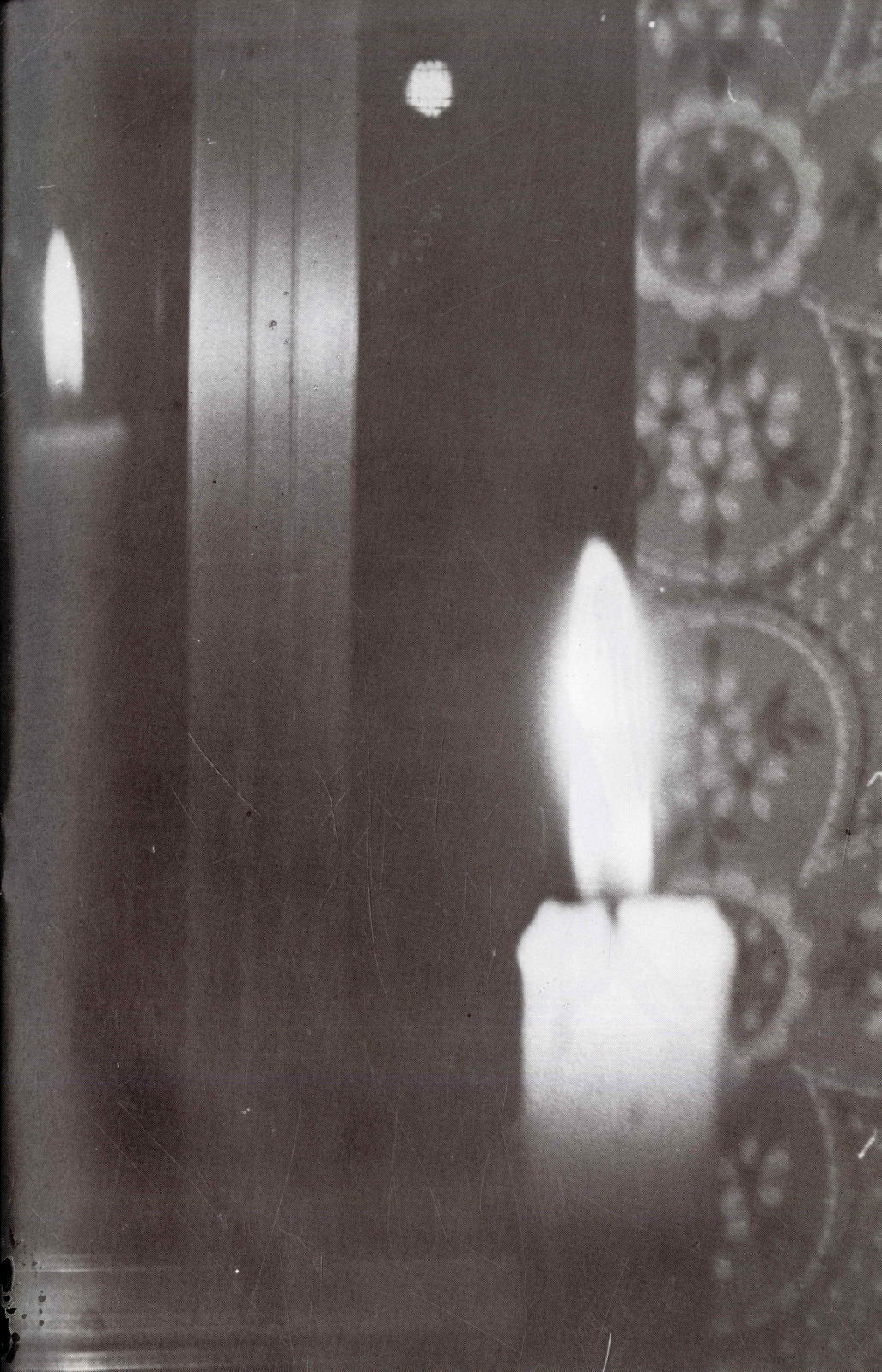
Amid the haven
Of pages written,
I find no answers, no light.



Pilgrim, where goest thou?
Is there a mecca for me
Or just for all others who seek . . .

Margaret Herron





FLOY

Spaghetti

The last time I saw Leonardo,
He was diversifying even more
By writing novels backwards.
But he wouldn't let me read
Them because he doesn't sell
Shares; he only appears an
Artist because he can't spell
And refuses to come to town
Even to live with me.

Rodger A. Matthews

(Facing Page: **TOWER** Award for Art—Floy Spenser)

Eenhorn

They don't see.

There . . . a glow in the mist,
A pearly horn
slowly twisting, shimmering.
sea foam froth
tumbling down,
spilling down the
neck and chin.
more delicate than a trembling deer,
lither than a mountain goat;
cleft hooves, deft hooves
with power of the wind.
lion's tail lashing—
elegant accent
to this miracle,
this virgin colored grace,
unconquerable spirit.

look into the eyes
if you dare to hold your head so high—
a deep forest,
the angry ocean,
solitude and immortality.
a glimpse will purify,
will heal.
But,
They don't see.

Inge K. Hinrichs

THE PIT

Descend into the dungeon
Past Ceberus's howls
To the darkened depths below
And in isolation
Bring forth the demons of self condemnation
That swoop threateningly before the fragile ego
Like frightened bats before a candle flame.
Conjure up the jeering jury of past acquaintances
Assemble them in collective derision
To draw forth accumulated abuses
That crack sharp
As a whip across a naked back.
Let the snapping sound of accusations
Shatter the veneer of assurance and acceptance
Leaving bloody wounds anointed
With salt biting feelings of insecurity and inferiority.
Exhausted, emaciated
The punishment over
Ascend the steps to the sun darkened regions above.
With invisible scars
Carry your cross
Like the masked martyr that you are
That we all are.

Barbara Reynolds

ROLE CALL

Cast and Quartered

1. December,
the far sight
on which
I would camp
tonight.

2. Dace
imbrue the pharos'
sating wish,
iodocombs
tunny.

3. Disember the fire,
cite
and witcheyed
come til
nigh.

4. Dose imbuer,
the farce eaten
we each owed
Comte
note.

Don Tinsley

Time In Thailand: Air Force Blue

Sterile grass lying stolid on the back of the earth,
The basic airman, stoved in the sweltering heat,
Grins in imagined bliss at the buzzing flies.
This grin fades as the red-rimmed silhouette
Of banana trees mesmerizes him to sleep.
He has felt incomplete, even though airplanes,
Women and mosquitoes occupied the warehouses
Of his mind, contenting him with trivia.

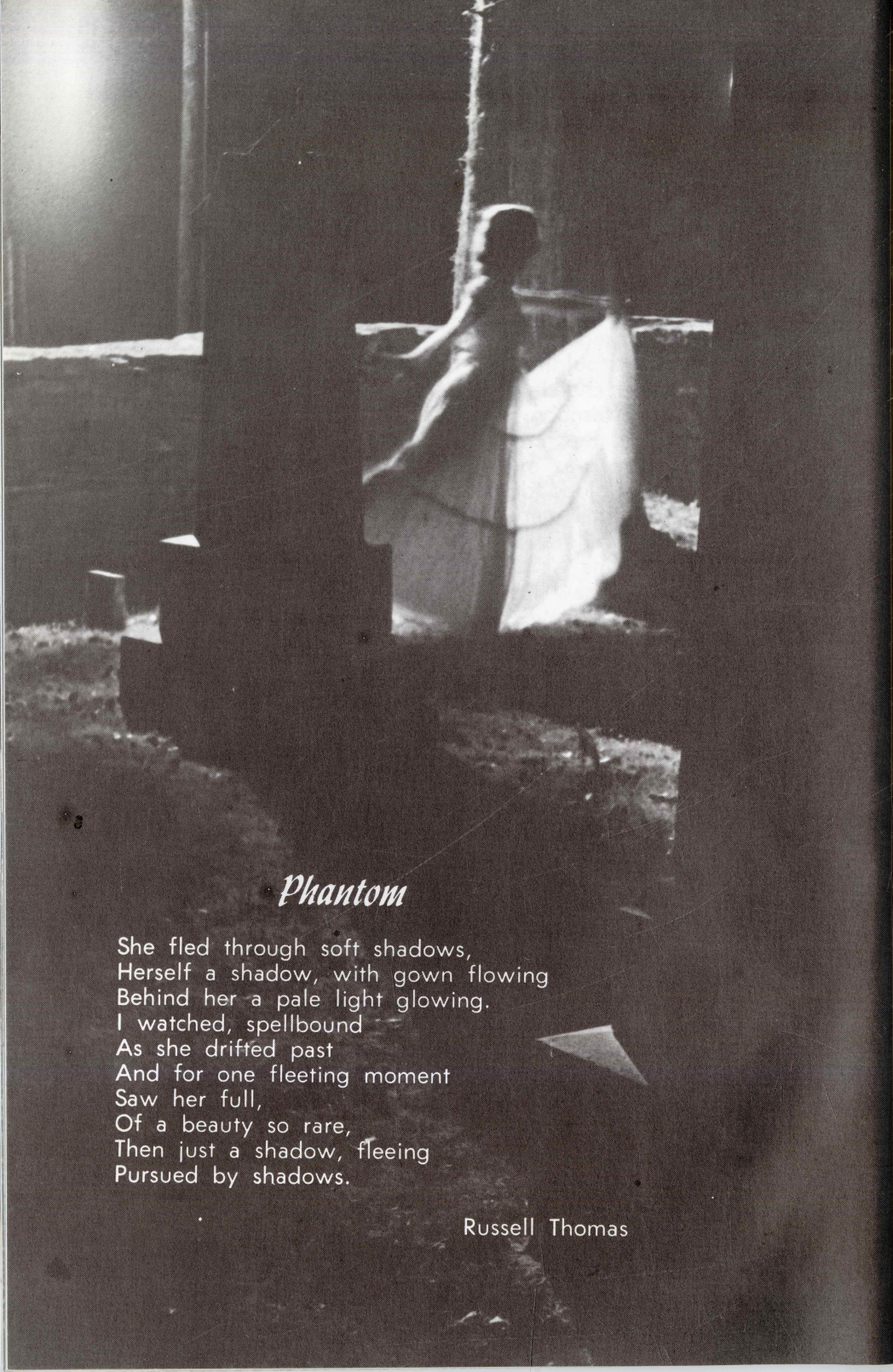
It gnaws at his soul with the teeth of pirhana
And brings dreams of patience sold for
Dime-store trinkets, leaving nothing but
A return trip through a mud-bogged day.
He only sees a dawn with the sun
Peeking over the jungle as a threatened
Punishment. He feels distress as he
Floats with the tide away from the shores
Of belief in home, while he takes on
Their alien manners, smiling and grimacing.
He undestands that nothing is more poignant
Than day after day after day . . .

Rodger A. Matthews

Ice

It was in January,
On a Sunday, I think.
Some of the roads on the mountain
Were closed that day
And we couldn't go
Down to church.
In the afternoon, somebody called.
They told me not to be upset.
The room was much too cold,
And the blood dried quickly.
His thoughts were found
On the walls and ceiling.
The curtains were thrown away.
We never saw the frozen soil thrown in.
We had to leave—
I don't remember why.
I don't know why, unless it was the cold.
I really do need a drink.
Got any bourbon? Got any ice?

Mary Anderson



Phantom

She fled through soft shadows,
Herself a shadow, with gown flowing
Behind her a pale light glowing.
I watched, spellbound
As she drifted past
And for one fleeting moment
Saw her full,
Of a beauty so rare,
Then just a shadow, fleeing
Pursued by shadows.

Russell Thomas

Dawn

I think the sunrise
is going to be
exceptionally good today.

'cause last night I prayed it
would be.

so now,
I'm sitting at the window,
checking out the merchandise . . .

the only problem is,
If it's another flop,
who do I write to
to
complain?

Jack Wright

"It's time."

"Already? you've only just gotten back. Let's put it off for awhile."

"What?"

"I'm not too keen on your going back to those savages anyway. You've hardly recovered from the last time. They'll nail you for sure if you go back now."

"I don't think so. Besides, they're expecting me. You told them I'd be coming back."

"That doesn't mean you have to go."

"Yes, I do. I'm committed. How would it look if I didn't go back?"

"I'm not worried about how it will look. I'm worried about you. You almost had a mental breakdown after you got back last time. I'm not sure you could handle it again."

"I can handle it. Last time I was expecting them to set me up on a glass pedestal. I didn't expect any opposition at all. This time I'll know what to expect."

"You thought you knew last time too and you see what they did to you. No. I just don't think it would be wise for you to go back."

"They're ready for me. They're killing themselves, their children, they're destroying themselves. But they'll listen to me now. The climate is right. They'll listen and learn like never before. Besides, I want to go back. They need me. They're like children who need someone to look after them. Besides you know what a Messiah instinct I have."

"I'm not sure it would be wise, though. If they kill their own children, then what makes you so sure they won't kill you?"

"They tried that last time but they couldn't do it. I've got a pretty tough skin. I don't expect any problems."

"You hope you don't have any problems. I still don't know. It's risky. Why don't we just skip that part of the program and go on to the next?"

"Without giving them a chance to redeem themselves? That would be a hypocrisy. Why . . ."

"Alright, you win. I never could deny you anything."

"Oh, I can think of a few occasions . . ."

"And they were for your own good. Remember, I've got a few years on you. I know what I'm doing."

"I never doubted that. But we'd better start making plans for my return. I'm going to have to leave soon."

"Okay. I'll have Gab make arrangements."

"No."

"What?"

"I said no."

"To what? I haven't said anything yet that requires a yes or a no."

"No, I'm not going back that way."

"But that's what they're going to expect."

"That's what they expected last time too."

"And you see how much trouble you got into by not having it."

"I can only see how much trouble it saved me."

"Saved you? If you'd listened to me and gone that way in the first place, you wouldn't have to go back now."

Yes I would. You know I would. How can you sit there and tell me I wouldn't? You had this all planned out a long time before I was around. It was your idea. Don't blame me."

"But I offered to change things."

"After making them impossible to change."

"Okay then, before I get angry, how do *you* want to go back?"

"The same way as the first time."

"No! Absolutely not! I refuse. That would only complicate matters. I'd only planned on you staying a matter of days. Your way would entail years."

"That's right. Years. I spent quite a few years there last time too if you remember."

"And you see the results don't you?"

"The only results that I see are that my job was a lot easier because I lived with them. I was one of them. They wouldn't listen to a stranger then and they won't now."

"I just don't like the idea. I don't think it would be wise. They're unpredictable. You can never tell what they'll do next."

"Yes, *you* can."

"I just don't like the idea."

"Well neither did I at first, but I went anyway. And now I'm glad I did. I learned to love those people, savage as they are, and I want to help them before they destroy themselves."

"Can't you do it from here? Send someone else. It's been so long, they won't remember what you look like anyway. Maybe John . . ."

"I want John to go. With me, though. Not for me. If I send someone else, it won't work. It has to be me."

"What makes you think they'll listen to you anyway? It's been a long time. Those you knew are long gone by now."

"I still have friends there. They're the ones I want to go back for. I want to get them out of there before they blow themselves up with all that hate they have inside themselves. I want to help them. Don't you understand? And besides you, I'm the only one who *can* help them. Surely you can see that. Let me go—in my way. I've lived with them. I know what to expect. I know how to approach them."

"Alright. Alright. Have it your way. But when this whole thing blows up, I'll be the first one to say I told you so."

"Fair enough. I only wish I could make you understand those people. They're murderers and thieves and savages, but they try hard to understand."

"I know. I've been in your shoes before. I know they're basically good. I'm just worried about you."

"It's worth it if even just one person listens."

"I know. I know. Go get ready. I'll make the arrangements."

The old man watched the younger one leave and wished that *he* had the comfort of a god to entrust *his* son's destiny to.

FOR RICHARD.

Debra D. Reddin

DÉTENTE HEADACHE NO. 493,001

Garbed in all the truth
And righteousness of Your Word
You kneel graciously
Before your Maker.

Having made your proposition
You await an answer
But hear only drawn-out, damning silence.
You rise in anger
Forgetting all bedside manner
And curse the silence
Realizing
That your bribes have fallen on deaf ears.

Billy Watt

MY NEED

Optimism vainly flees
In the face of loneliness,
As a wounded dove flees the hawk.
I need no Magic Bridges
To speed that dove homeward.
Flying low as a poisoned shaft,
It carries its deadly certainty
To pierce the duskier regions of my soul;
There to swell and thrive in darkness,
Its tendrils reaching, straining
To grasp my frustrated heart
And tighten to encircle it, embrace it, subdue it.
Then I cry out in mingled despair and longing
From my mountain of anguish
To hear it echo from deep within
Some anonymous valley:
"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!"
But I seek not God . . . .

Debbie Reideler

THE GROUP

In a sheltered circle
They sit in consoling consultation
A collection of comfortless castaways
Boasting their beliefs
Denying their doubts
Voicing their individuality
Yet clinging to their unity
Like drowning men about a capsized boat.
Searching for security
They came together
Gathering sustenance,
But that strength
Turned to the viciousness of a wolverine
As the mass practiced their sophisticated psychological games
Of manipulation and mutilation
While looking on with a cynical Narcissian stare.
Like Walden Pond
Said to reflect the world
They were, themselves, mirrors of all thy abhorred;
Talking of freedom
Amid the rusty rattle of their own chains.

Barbara Reynolds

From The Triumphs Of Adolf And Petra

Adolf

Adolf sat among the group of men, men all with strange faces but one, all streaked, blurred by a cold rain which might have been falling, could it be, yes, had been falling forever with no end from a grey, sleeting sky. And where in God's name were they, surrounded by brown, sodden trees, dripping and shivering in the wind, these strange, lost faces? The war? Ah yes, Adolf thought to himself, the war. He had a gun, had had a gun though it was now lost somewhere in the mud where he sat, hugging himself. But, what war, which one? Adolf thought back, back, pressed his memory for the answer but could remember nothing, then could think of nothing but the rain dripping from his chin, from his straggling hair, running down the nape of his neck, no longer being soaked up by his cloak but standing cold and chill against his skin.

Then Adolf felt danger, knew they were in danger because they had been running, it seemed, and he felt his blood run colder. Run, run for their lives, why had they stopped, they must go, quickly, hurry for their lives Adolf started to scream . . . lost, lost he remembered, where . . .

Again he started to speak. Mother? Mother? I need you. I want you, I . . . Adolf called on her image in his mind, searched out her face but couldn't remember, couldn't recall. He knew he had one, knew he had one because, because he was here, here in the rain and he could feel it, it was cold, he could feel it.

Adolf held himself tighter, pulled the collar against his neck, against the ever falling rain and began to sing, something pulled from the distant eons of his past, sometime before the rain, the war. Rockabye, baby, rock . . .

When Adolf again looked up at the partially hidden faces about him he was thirsty and with his tongue caught a few drops of water which rolled from the end of his nose. They somehow tasted like the rain had smelled when he had sheltered in the hayloft during a summer shower, the drops misting to him as he lay, drops drip dropping into the puddles standing below, when he was a boy, when he was young.

Young? How old was he? A small shock of pleasure coursed through Adolf as he eagerly sought back, trying to remember birthdays, each birthday, every one, of course not the first birthday, he laughed, how can a one year old child remember a birth-

day, all the strange old faces pressing against his, it scared him, he saw the opaque drops dripping from his nose, lost in puddles brownly reflecting his strange face.

His face. What did he look like? Adolf leaned closer to the mud to see his face wavering like a mirage, a dream, ripples distorting the muddy eyes gazing back. It exploded, his face, the mud churned by bullets biting into it around him. Adolf jumped, ran, branches tearing at his face, his cloak, holding him back as he ran. He must go, get away, run, home, Mother! Adolf fell against the slimey embankment, tore, clawed to the top, heard more shots and turned to see the familiar face of his brother, eyes staring, body twitching in the throes of death, blood spilling from his mouth onto the red clay, washed away by the rain, his brother, dead.

Adolf looked down at his hands, the mud mingling with his vomit. How long had he knelt there, where was he, where was . . . Dead. Yes, he was dead, that was what the matter was, he was . . . no, no, not him, not Adolf. His brother.

Adolf felt the grief well up, catch in his throat. He remembered his brother lying in the mud, blood beaten away by the rain. Adolf crawled to a shock of bushes nearby him, curled himself around its roots, pulled its boughs covered with brown, wet, dead leaves about him, cried softly into his hands, and passed into darkness.

Russell Thomas

Roller Coaster

A steely maze bends 'round,
Above the drip-cold cast.
And among the doubtful smiles,
Some feel its short, rough blast.

Each mounting click brings cheers,
For one who leaves his fears.

Now knowing where my journey's end,
I'll hop up here and head on in,
For another go.

T. J. Phillips

NOVEL

Prologue
Love is cherishable—
don't let it spoil.

Chapter 1
I told her she was a vision
but she only said,"go to hell!"

Chapter 2
Surprised is the thief who
slides in through the window
only to discover that there
is someone at home.

Chapter 3
The world drowns me in spaghetti
but always forgets the cheese.

Chapter 4
Death is a narrow door and
squeezing life thru kills you.

Epilogue
I saw eternity the other night
—just another subway
ending in Central Park.

Rodger. A. Matthews